

Dedication Ceremony

Bluff Point Memorial Pulpit

ADDRESS BY REV. F. HART

In the presence of a large congregation, which included representation from the Geraldton Municipal Council and ex-servicemen's organisations, at St. George's Church at Bluff Point on Sunday evening the Bishop of North-West Australia (Right Rev. J. Frewer) dedicated the memorial pulpit "to the memory of the fallen in World War II and as a thanksgiving for Victory." To the singing of the hymn "We Love the Place, O God," the Bishop, accompanied by the church wardens (Messrs. W. J. Webber and J. E. Tribe), entered the church and proceeded to the sanctuary. Evensong was sung to the third Collect and after the rendering of the hymn "O Word of God Above" His Lordship led the congregation in a prayer of remembrance, following which Mesdames W. L. Webber and A. Smith unveiled the beautiful hand-carved pulpit. The dedication ceremony then proceeded according to a service authorised specially for the occasion by Bishop Frewer.

In the course of the occasional sermon the Rector (Rev. F. Hart) said that there was none in the crowded church that night who could escape death, and none could dodge the judgment to follow it, by Almighty God. As they went through life supported and encouraged by their own confidence, they were occasionally prompted by the sobering thought of death. The greatest thing of all was the judgment of God and what would He say to each of them. They had gathered that evening to remember the men, women and the children, too, who had gone through the valley of death in order that those they left behind could be free. It seemed rather trite to make such a

statement. They heard it repeatedly, but they could not be reminded too frequently that men and woman had given their lives for them. But why had they done so? They gathered each Anzac Day and on November 11th to listen to orations on this subject, but still they addressed themselves the question, "Why had these men and women made such sacrifices?" He was certain that these things would appear to make no difference to very many. They all asked the question, "What is wrong with the world," but what was the good of saying this and then doing nothing about it. Having asked themselves this question they might address themselves the more pertinent query, "What am I doing about these things to put them right?" They read in their daily papers many things which appalled them, but they just left it at that. They heard the question asked, "What is Christianity doing about it," but they seemed to forget that they were all part of this Christian structure. For instance, Christianity in the district was doing its best for the Save the Children Fund. A mere handful of women and children were working and saving to assist as far as possible, yet the cynical man asked, "What is Christianity doing about the state of the world?" They could not get blood from a stone, but they expected and did receive assistance from Christian men and women.

"We truly honor those who gave their lives. There is not an ex-serviceman in this church to-night whose mind does not go back to someone who gave his life in the cause of freedom. We honor those who returned and those who spent years in the solitary confinement of prison camps. We honor all who fought so that we could have our freedom, but that is all we do. We go no further. We do not take the torch from the hand of those who fought and tell them we will carry on. No, we just content ourselves by being grateful. On Anzac Day we get sentimental about the things which were done for us and then on the following day we forget all about it. Where is all this leading us

about it. Where is all this leading us to, and where are we all going to finish? We are doing nothing about the things which we really and truly love. The man and woman, who are leading decent lives, want to know why there should be so much sin and wrong in an enlightened age. You have to admit with me that there is something wrong.

"The man who does not honor his just card debts in a club is expelled and the man who neglects to pay his lodge dues is struck off the members list, yet men who are doing what is many folds worse than these things are received with open arms by society. I honestly feel that we have failed in our first duty which is to fear God and honor His Commandments. We fail because the average man and woman is not prepared to worship Almighty God. Some will tell me, 'I worship God in the valleys.' How many people get down on their knees and worship God in nature. I candidly do not believe you. How many worship God as revealed in the splendour of a glorious sunrise. You may remark, 'It is a beaut,' and leave it at that. You perhaps recognise God in these things, but you do not worship Him. God demands worship and adoration; He demands devotion and every thing that it is possible for us to offer Him. Religion does not just consist of finding God. It is something far greater; it is finding through God salvation, which will lead us to eternal life. The only way we can find Him is by fearing God and obeying his Commandments."

He would believe that men sought righteousness and freedom when they lived these things in their lives, continued Rev. Hart. Words were empty things in themselves, but he looked to see men, according to their denominational beliefs, being faithful to their principles and prepared to devote themselves to God so that they might stand before their fellowmen and profess, "I fear God and keep His Commandments." The choice was in their own hands if they were to honor the sacrifices made by God and by men for their freedom, for the choice had to be made

freedom, for the choice had to be made if they were to avert the threatening disaster. Blame for what might transpire would not be laid at the feet of the church, but at the feet of each individual unless they made their choice in accordance with the teachings of Christianity.

The service concluded with the singing of the hymn, "Jesus, where'er Thy People Meet."